Electronically FILED by \$perior Court of California, County of Los Angeles on 03/04/2019 12:13 Sherri R. Carter, Executive Officer/Clerk of Court, by Ricardo Perez, Deputy Clerk Exempt From Filing Fee Government Code § 6103] LOUIS R. MILLER (State Bar No. 54141) smiller@millerbarondess.com MIRA HASHMALL (State Bar No. 216842) mhashmall@millerbarondess.com EMILY A. SANCHIRICO (State Bar No. 311294) esanchirico@millerbarondess.com MILLER BÄRONDESS, LLP 1999 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 1000 Los Angeles, California 90067 Telephone: (310) 552-4400 Facsimile: (310) 552-8400 7 Attorneys for Petitioner/Plaintiff COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES 8 SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA 9 10 COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CENTRAL DISTRICT 11 ATTORNEYS AT LAW
1999 AVENUE OF THE STARS, SUITE 1000 LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90067 CASE NO. 19(+CP0063> COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, 12 PETITION FOR WRIT OF MANDATE MILLER BARONDESS, LLP Petitioner/Plaintiff, 13 (C.C.P. § 1085) 14 ٧. COMPLAINT FOR DECLARATORY AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF ALEX VILLANUEVA, Sheriff of Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department; CAREN CARL MANDOYAN, an individual; LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT; and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive, 18 Respondents/Defendants. 19 20 REDACTED VERSION 21 22 PUBLICLY FILED 23 24 25 26

PETITION FOR WRIT OF MANDATE; COMPLAINT FOR DECLARATORY AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF

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Petitioner and Plaintiff the County of Los Angeles ("County" or "Petitioner") petitions this Court for a writ of mandate, as well as declaratory and injunctive relief (the "Petition"), against Respondents and Defendants Los Angeles County Sheriff Alex Villanueva ("Villanueva"); Caren Carl Mandoyan ("Mandoyan"); the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department ("Department"); and Does 1 through 10, inclusive (collectively, "Respondents") as follows:

I. INTRODUCTION

- 1. Villanueva was elected as Los Angeles County Sheriff and sworn in on December 3, 2018. After Villanueva was sworn in, one of his first actions was to reinstate Mandoyan, who had served as Villanueva's personal driver and as an active volunteer on the Villanueva campaign.
- 2. Mandoyan, a former Deputy Sheriff, had been discharged from the Department in 2016 after a fellow deputy came forward with serious allegations about Mandoyan's conduct. The charges against him included domestic abuse, physical assault, stalking and harassment.

The decision to discharge Mandoyan—like all personnel decisions at the County—

- was not taken lightly.

 At the conclusion of the investigation, and after a *Skelly*hearing where Mandoyan had the opportunity to respond to the charges, the Department discharged Mandoyan.
- 4. Mandoyan appealed his discharge to the Los Angeles County Civil Service

 Commission (the "Commission").

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- On May 23, 2018, the Commission made Mandoyan's discharge final (the "Final 6. Commission Action").
- Mandoyan challenged the Final Commission Action in an August 13, 2018 writ 7. petition, in addition to filing an August 27, 2018 civil complaint against the County.
- After being sworn in, Villanueva disregarded his duty to comply with the Final Commission Action. Specifically, Villanueva authorized the Department to enter into an agreement with Mandoyan whereby the Department purported to resolve Mandoyan's civil actions against the County, rewrite Mandoyan's disciplinary record, void the findings of the IAB and the Commission, and reinstate Mandoyan to his former position of Deputy Sheriff (the "Settlement Agreement").
- The County Charter vests the Office of County Counsel and/or the Board of Supervisors with exclusive authority over civil actions and proceedings involving or concerning the County and County officers. As a County officer, the Sheriff acts under the authority and supervision of the Board of Supervisors. As such, Villanueva and the Department were without authority to enter into the Settlement Agreement with Mandoyan.
- Nor did Villanueva and the Department have authority to reinstate Mandoyan. 10. Under the County Charter and the Los Angeles County Civil Service Rules, reinstatement after separation requires approval by the Director of Personnel, and reinstatement within two years of separation. Moreover, the underlying separation from the County must have been "without fault or delinquency."
- Mandoyan's reinstatement was not approved by the Director of Personnel, it came 11. more than two years after his discharge, and the Final Commission Action determined that his discharge from the County was not "without fault or delinquency." Mandoyan's purported reinstatement as a Deputy Sheriff is void as a matter of law.

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- 15. Respondents' actions are exposing the County to significant liability, threatening public safety, and undermining trust in the Department.
- 16. The Settlement Agreement is void as a matter of law, and Villanueva and the Department did not have authority to reinstate Mandoyan. Accordingly, the County brings this action to compel Respondents to act in accordance with the County Charter, County Code, and Civil Service Commission Rules by recognizing and implementing the Final Commission Action.

II. THE PARTIES

- 17. Petitioner and Plaintiff County of Los Angeles is a charter county organized under the laws of the State of California.
- 18. Respondent and Defendant Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department is a law enforcement agency charged with maintaining peace and order in Los Angeles County.
- Respondent and Defendant Los Angeles County Sheriff Alex Villanueva is the Sheriff of Los Angeles County.
- Respondent and Defendant Caren Carl Mandoyan is an individual residing in
 Los Angeles County.
- 21. The County does not know the true names or capacities of Respondents and Defendants designated Does 1 through 10, inclusive, and therefore sues said Respondents and Defendants under fictitious names. The County will amend this Petition and Complaint to show

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their true names and capacities when ascertained.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE III.

- This Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to California Constitution 22. Article VI, Section 10; California Code of Civil Procedure section 410.10; and California Code of Civil Procedure section 1085.
- Venue in this Court is proper under California Code of Civil Procedure section 401 23. because the conduct complained of herein occurred in the County of Los Angeles and the Respondents are all located in the County of Los Angeles.
 - The County has performed all conditions precedent to filing this action. 24.

IV. **FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS**

The County Of Los Angeles, County Counsel And The Sheriff A.

- The County of Los Angeles is a charter county organized under the laws of the 25. State of California.
- The California Constitution empowers charter counties to regulate the powers and 26. duties of the County's officers and governing body.
- In accordance with the California Constitution, the County adopted a County 27. Charter. The County Charter sets forth the powers and duties of the County's officers and governing body.
- Article VI, Section 21 of the County Charter states that the County Counsel "shall 28. have exclusive charge and control of all civil actions and proceedings in which the County or any officer thereof, is concerned or is a party."
- In light of Section 21, settlement agreements concerning civil actions and 29. proceedings involving the County or a County officer contain a signature by a County Counsel lawyer or a counsel operating under County Counsel supervision.
- The Sheriff of Los Angeles is a County officer. As a County officer, the Sheriff 30. acts under the authority and supervision of the Board of Supervisors.

В. The Civil Service Rules

The County has a Civil Service System that the Director of Personnel is tasked with 31.

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administering in accordance with the County Charter and the Civil Service Rules, and under the direction of the Board of Supervisors. The Civil Service System governs classified employees in the County of Los Angeles.

- The Civil Service Rules are prescribed for the purpose of "carrying out the Charter 32. provisions, of assuring the continuance of the merit system, of promoting efficiency in the dispatch of public business, and of assuring all employees in the classified service of fair and impartial treatment at all times subject to Merit System Standards and appeal rights."
- Rule 1.02 states that, in furtherance of that purpose, "the county will exercise its 33. exclusive right to determine the mission of each of its departments, districts, boards and commissions, and the assignment of work to be performed, transfer and reassignment of employees, the right to hire or rehire, to properly classify employees, to promote or demote employees, to layout and recall employees, to discipline and discharge employees, and to determine the methods, means and personnel by which the county's operations are to be conducted" (emphasis added).
- Under Rule 1.01, the Civil Service Rules have the force and effect of law: 34. "Pursuant to the California Constitution and the Charter of the County of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles County board of supervisors does prescribe and adopt these Rules, which shall have the force and effect of law."
- Rule 17 sets forth the conditions for reinstatement after separation from County 35. service. Rule 17 states, in pertinent part:

After approval by the director of personnel, any person who has been separated from county service without fault or delinquency may be reinstated by the appointing power within two years from the date of such separation

Accordingly, a former employee can only be reinstated after separation from the 36. County if the reinstatement has the approval by the Director of Personnel, the reinstatement is within two years of separation, and the underlying separation from the County was "without fault or delinquency."

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C. The Civil Service Commission

- The Commission is a County Charter-mandated body that acts as the appellate 37. body for major disciplinary actions, discharges, reductions, suspensions in excess of five days, and discrimination complaints filed by County employees within the Civil Service Commission.
- 38. Under Sections 31 and 34 of the County Charter, the Commission "shall serve as an appellate body in accordance with the provisions of Sections 35(4) and 35(6) of this article and as provided in the Civil Service Rules."
- 39. In cases of serious discipline, such as discharge, an employee may petition the Commission for a full evidentiary hearing. If the request for a hearing is granted, the burden of proof is on the appointing power to prove that the discipline imposed was appropriate.
- Decisions of the Commission are final determinations. Under Civil Service 40. Rule 4.14, any party can appeal a final decision of the Commission to the Superior Court within 90 days.

The County Code And The Department Manual D.

- 41. The County also has a County Code of ordinances passed by the Board of Supervisors.
- Chapter 5.64 of the County Code governs County badges. Under that Chapter, 42. "[a]ll official badges shall remain the property of the county of Los Angeles and shall at no time become the personal property of any individual except as provided for elsewhere in this chapter. When any person severs his connection with the department or retires it shall be his duty to return his official badge to his department head."
- Chapter 5.64 also prohibits the unauthorized possession or use of official badges by 43. stating that a person "shall not possess any [County] badge after his right to wear such badge has been terminated." Any person who violates Chapter 5.64 is guilty of a misdemeanor.
- Chapter 5.72 governs County uniforms. Like badges, all uniforms issued to deputy 44. sheriffs "shall remain the property of the county."
- The Department's Manual of Policy and Procedures also addresses the return of 45. County property when a sworn member is separated from the Department. Section 3-01/040.20 of

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that Manual requires a separated Deputy Sheriff to:

- Return County issued weapon and handcuffs to the Logistics Section, Fiscal Administration and obtain a receipt; and
- Return uniform badge, flat badge, cap piece and identification cards to Personnel Administration and obtain a receipt.
- Section 3-01/040.40 of the Manual prohibits the misappropriation of County 46. property.

The Department Discharges Mandoyan, And The Commission Upholds The Ε. **Discharge**

- Mandoyan worked for the Department as a Deputy Sheriff at the South Los 47. Angeles Station.
- In or around July 2015, a female Deputy Sheriff came forward with serious 48. allegations against Mandoyan. The charges against him included domestic abuse, physical assault, stalking and harassment.
- 49. The Deputy Sheriff filed an application for a temporary restraining order against Mandoyan. In her application, she alleged that Mandoyan had assaulted her by grabbing her neck and holding it, and that he had tried to break into her home twice.
- According to the Deputy Sheriff's allegations, Mandoyan had admitted to using 50. surveillance to listen to her conversations and to watching her leave her home. She further alleged that Mandoyan had sent her harassing text messages. She provided photos and video footage to support her allegations.
- Accordingly, the Department directed the IAB to conduct a formal investigation 51. into Mandoyan's conduct. Mandoyan was relieved of his duties pending the outcome of the investigation.
 - 52.
- 26 27
 - On or around August 15, 2016, Mandoyan was notified that the Department 53.

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as its final decision.

intended to discharge him. He was offered the opportunity to respond to the Department's notice of discharge at a Skelly hearing.

- On or around September 6, 2016, the Department held a Skelly hearing. 54.
- On or around September 14, 2016, the Department notified Mandoyan that it was 55. formally discharging him.
- Mandoyan appealed his discharge to the Civil Service Commission and requested a 56. full evidentiary hearing. Mandoyan's request was granted. The Commission appointed a Hearing Officer to conduct the hearing.
- 57. 58. The Hearing Officer issued findings of fact, conclusions of law, and his recommended decision.
- The Commission overruled Mandoyan's objections and approved the Hearing 60. Officer's findings. The Commission subsequently adopted the Hearing Officer's recommendation
- On or around May 23, 2018, the Commission issued the Final Commission Action. 61. The Commission notified Mandoyan of his right to seek review with the Superior Court.

Mandoyan Challenges The Final Commission Action F.

On August 13, 2018, Mandoyan filed a verified writ petition with the Los Angeles 62. Superior Court (Case No. BS174714) against the County and the Department. Mandoyan asked the Court to vacate the Final Commission Action, restore his employment, and award him back

pay with interest.

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- Mandoyan acknowledged in his filing that "the Commission has quasi-judicial 63. responsibility and its determination with respect to administrative adjudication is final."
- On August 27, 2018, Mandoyan filed a complaint for damages against the County 64. with the Los Angeles Superior Court (Case No. BC719337) alleging various claims arising from his hearing before the Commission.

G. Villanueva Purports To Reinstate Mandoyan

- While Mandoyan's actions challenging the Final Commission Action were 65. pending, he served as Villanueva's personal driver and as an active volunteer on Villanueva's political campaign. On or around December 3, 2018, Villanueva was sworn into office as the Sheriff of Los Angeles County.
- 66. Soon thereafter, Villanueva unilaterally "settled" Mandoyan's lawsuits and reinstated Mandoyan as a Deputy Sheriff, all without the approval of County Counsel, the Board of Supervisors, or the Director of Personnel. Villanueva stated that he would be reviewing other disciplinary cases as well, all under the purview of what he referred to as a "truth and reconciliation" commission.
- 67. Mandoyan's reinstatement did not comply with Civil Service Rule 17.01: his reinstatement was not approved by the Director of Personnel, it came more than two years after his discharge, and his discharge from the County was not "without fault or delinquency."
- The reinstatement of Mandoyan caused a public outcry. On January 22, 2019, 68. Villanueva appeared before the Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission. When the commissioners raised concerns about the reinstatement of Mandoyan, Villanueva defended Mandoyan and questioned the credibility of the accuser, including criticizing her for waiting to file a report. Villanueva also allegedly stated that a domestic violence firing must be "related to employment."
- One week later, on January 29, 2019, Villanueva appeared before the Board of 69. Supervisors. Supervisors Kathryn Barger and Sheila Kuehl moved the Board of Supervisors to send a letter to Villanueva expressing the Board's concerns about the reinstatement of Mandoyan, and requesting that Villanueva reconsider the reinstatement and/or respond to the Board's

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concerns. The motion was passed. Although Villanueva initially stated that Mandoyan would waive confidentiality so the Board of Supervisors could review his personnel file, he later rescinded that offer.

- On January 30, 2019, the Board of Supervisors sent a letter, signed by all five 70. Supervisors, to Villanueva. The letter reminded Villanueva that Mandoyan's discharge "was based on documented evidence and the grounds for termination were upheld by the Civil Service Commission." The Supervisors wrote that there were "grave concerns over how this particular matter has been handled and the message it sends to law enforcement personnel, as well as victims of domestic violence and the public at large."
- 71. Next, on February 19, 2019, the ACLU of Southern California and other prominent community groups wrote to Villanueva and expressed their concerns about the reinstatement of Mandoyan, which they described as "deeply troubling." The ACLU explained that the reinstatement was particularly problematic in the law enforcement context, because "[1]aw enforcement who abuse their partners have access to weapons and surveillance tools that make them particularly dangerous and difficult to escape." The ACLU noted that Mandoyan had "illustrated this power when he reminded his ex-girlfriend that he had 'eyes and ears everywhere.""
- The ACLU letter explained to Villanueva that the International Association of 72. Chiefs of Police ("IACP") has a zero tolerance policy for law enforcement who commit domestic violence. The IACP also requires a parallel administrative process and states that "[r]egardless of the outcome of the criminal case, the department shall uphold all administrative decisions."
- The Los Angeles branch of the National Lawyers Guild, Justice LA and the Youth 73. Justice Coalition were among the 41 signatories to the February 19, 2019 public letter to Villanueva.

The County Discovers The Settlement Agreement H.

On or around February 5, 2019, the Department of Auditor-Controller received a 74. request from the Department to pay Mandoyan back pay for the period from September 26, 2016 through December 27, 2018, per the terms of the Settlement Agreement.

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2	Department's request because the Settlement Agreement did not contain a signature by a County	
3	Counsel lawyer or a counsel operating under County Counsel supervision, which in the normal	
4	course it would. This was how the Office of County Counsel officially learned that Villanueva	
5	had authorized	I the Department to enter into the Settlement Agreement with Mandoyan.
6	76.	The Settlement Agreement purported to void the Final Commission Action and
7	reinstate Mandoyan as a Deputy Sheriff.	
8	77.	Among other things, the Settlement Agreement
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15	79.	In exchange, Mandoyan purported to waive his rights to administrative and judicial
16	remedies in co	nnection with the IAB investigation and dismiss the civil actions pending against
17	the County (C	ase Nos. BS174714 and BC719337).
18	80.	On or around January 17, 2019, the Department and Mandoyan executed an
19	amendment to	the Settlement Agreement
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23	81.	The Settlement Agreement was not approved by the County Counsel or the Board
24	of Supervisors and did not contain a signature of a County Counsel lawyer or a counsel operating	
25	under County Counsel supervision.	
26	I.	The County's Efforts To Enforce The Final Commission Action

The Department of Auditor-Controller alerted the Office of County Counsel of the

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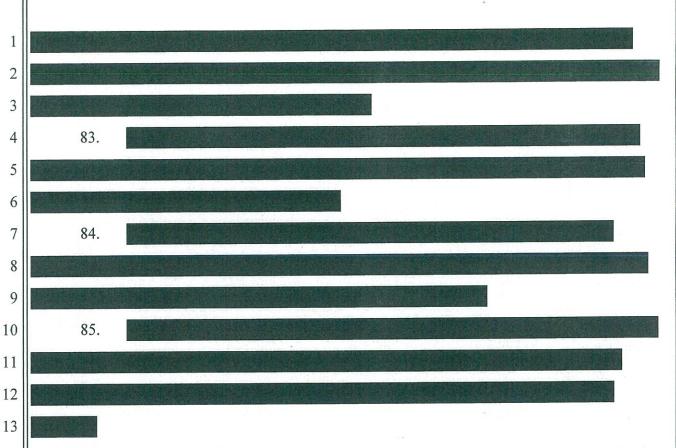
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- Notwithstanding the foregoing communications, Respondents continue to refuse to 86. comply with the Final Commission Action. Villanueva has repeatedly refused to recognize Mandoyan's status as a discharged former employee, and has informed the County that he will not reconsider his position.
- Meanwhile, Mandoyan is still purporting to hold himself out as a Deputy Sheriff. 87. Mandoyan, as a separated employee, is obligated to comply with the return conditions governing County property. To the County's knowledge, he has failed to surrender his weapon and his badge, and all other County property, in violation of the County Code and the Department Manual.
- Respondents' actions are exposing the County to significant liability, threatening 88. public safety, and undermining trust in the Department.
- The County brings this action to compel Respondents to act in accordance with the 89. County Charter, County Code and Civil Service Commission Rules by recognizing and implementing the Final Commission Action.

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FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION FOR PETITION FOR WRIT OF MANDATE (C.C.P. § 1085)

(Against All Defendants/Respondents)

- The County incorporates and alleges the allegations in paragraphs 1 through 89, 90. inclusive, as if fully set forth herein.
- Villanueva and the Department, and those officers and employees acting by and 91. through their authority, have a clear, present and ministerial duty to act in accordance with the County Charter, County Code and Civil Service Commission Rules by complying with the Final Commission Action.
- Villanueva and the Department, by refusing to recognize and implement the Final 92. Commission Action, purporting to reinstate Mandoyan, and entering into the ultra vires Settlement Agreement with him, are acting contrary to their duties to comply with the County Charter, County Code and Civil Service Commission Rules.
- Villanueva and the Department are also acting contrary to their duties by refusing 93. to return Mandoyan's County property, including, but not limited to, his weapon, uniform, and badge. Possession of the County property by a separated employee is prohibited by the County Code and the Department's Manual of Policy and Procedures. Villanueva and the Department have refused to collect the weapon and badge from Mandoyan, who continues to hold himself out as a Department employee.
- Mandoyan has also refused to return the County property. To the County's 94. knowledge, he has failed to comply with his obligations, as a former employee separated from County service, to surrender his weapon and his badge, and all other County property. Mandoyan's actions are in violation of the County Code and the Department's Manual of Policy and Procedures, which separated employees are subject to as it relates to the return of County property. Moreover, holding himself out as a Deputy Sheriff violates the California Penal Code and the California Government Code.
- The actions of Respondents have caused, and will continue to cause, irreparable 95. harm to the County. Respondents' actions are exposing the County to significant liability, threatening public safety, and undermining trust in the Department.

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- The County has no adequate remedy at law. Absent judicial relief, Villanueva and 96. the Department will continue to recognize Mandoyan as an employee of the Department, and Mandoyan will continue to hold himself out as a Deputy Sheriff.
 - The County has performed all conditions precedent to filing this action. 97.

SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION FOR DECLARATORY RELIEF (Against All Defendants)

- The County incorporates and alleges the allegations in paragraphs 1 through 97, 98. inclusive, as if fully set forth herein.
- An actual and present controversy has arisen between the County, on the one hand, 99. and Villanueva, the Department and Mandoyan, on the other, regarding the Settlement Agreement. The County contends that the Settlement Agreement entered into by Mandoyan and the Department, and authorized by Villanueva, is null and void. The County Charter vests the Office of County Counsel and/or the Board of Supervisors with exclusive authority over civil actions and proceedings involving or concerning the County and County officers.
- As such, the Department and Villanueva were without authority to enter into a 100. Settlement Agreement with Mandoyan that purported to resolve Mandoyan's pending actions against the County, provide for reinstatement of Mandoyan as a Deputy Sheriff in the Department, and obligate the County to pay substantial back pay.
- Mandoyan and Villanueva disagree and contend that the Settlement Agreement is 101. valid and that they had authority to enter into a settlement with the Department.
- 102. A judicial declaration is therefore necessary and appropriate to determine the validity of the Settlement Agreement.

THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION FOR DECLARATORY RELIEF (Against All Defendants)

- The County incorporates and alleges the allegations in paragraphs 1 through 102, 103. inclusive, as if fully set forth herein.
- An actual and present controversy has arisen between the County, on the one hand, and Villanueva, the Department, and Mandoyan, on the other, regarding the purported

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reinstatement of Mandoyan. The County contends that Mandoyan's reinstatement did not comply with Civil Service Rule 17.01: his reinstatement was not approved by the Director of Personnel, it came more than two years after his discharge, and his discharge from the County was not "without fault or delinquency."

- Mandoyan and Villanueva disagree and contend that Villanueva had authority to 105. reinstate Mandoyan.
- A judicial declaration is therefore necessary and appropriate to determine the effect 106. of the purported reinstatement of Villanueva.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff/Petitioner prays for judgment as follows:

- As to the First Cause of Action, that this Court issue a peremptory writ of mandate, (1) pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure section 1085, compelling Respondents to comply with the County Charter, County Code, and Civil Service Commission Rules by recognizing and implementing the Final Commission Action and Mandoyan's discharge; and to direct Mandoyan to return any and all County property including, but not limited to, his weapon and badge;
- As to the Second Cause of Action, a declaration that the Settlement Agreement (2) entered into by Respondents and Mandoyan, purporting to reinstate Mandoyan and rewrite his disciplinary record, is null and void;
- As to the Third Cause of Action, a declaration that Villanueva and the (3) Department's reinstatement of Mandoyan was unlawful and without effect;
- As to all causes of action, declaratory and/or injunctive relief against (4) Respondents/Defendants directing them to comply with the County Charter, County Code, and Civil Service Commission Rules including, without limitation, returning all County property and making the County whole, and confirming that the County Counsel and/or the Board of Supervisors have exclusive authority over civil actions and proceedings involving or concerning the County or a County officer:

For costs of suit, including attorneys' fees; and (5) For such other and further relief as is just and proper. (6) MILLER BARONDESS, LLP DATED: March 3, 2019 By: LOUIS R. MILLER Attorneys for Petitioner/Plaintiff COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

MILLER BARONDESS, LLP Attornis at Law 1999 Avenue of The Stars, Suite 1000 Los Angeles, Calfornia 90067 Tel: (310) 532-4400 Fax: (310) 532-8400